

MSGNO 3 (STXX) *01/01/88* *05:13:50.1.6*
ZCZC 10:12:44Z (ST)
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STATE

88 7362660 SSP

TOR: 010905Z JAN 88

NC 7362660
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TO RUFHOL/AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY 2055
RUEHDM/AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY 5522
RUEHKU/AMEMBASSY KUWAIT PRIORITY 8644
RUFHLD/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 8111
RUEHNC/AMEMBASSY NICOSIA PRIORITY 3255
RUFHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 2820
RUFHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY 5908
RUSNNOA/USCCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY
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EZ1:
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TERREP
E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PTER, LE, IR
SUBJECT: FADLALLAH'S CALL FOR THE RELEASE OF HOSTAGES
REF: BEIRUT 7320
1. SECRET - ENTIRE TEXT
2. DEPARTMENT APPRECIATES REFTTEL'S ANALYSIS OF
SHEIKH FADLALLAH'S CALL FOR THE RELEASE OF "INNOCENT
HOSTAGES WHO DO NOT MOVE IN THE FRAMEWORK OF SPYING
OR ANIMOSITY TO THE NATION." DEPARTMENT FILES SHOW A
NUMBER OF PREVIOUS FADLALLAH CONDEMNATIONS OF
HOSTAGE-HOLDING, INCLUDING A SIMILAR "CHRISTMAS
MESSAGE" IN 1985:
--5/15/85: STATEMENT TO BEIRUT PRESS -- "WE CONDEMN
ALL KIDNAPPINGS, PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO

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HUMANITARIAN INSTITUTIONS... AND WE ASK ALL CITIZENS OF WEST BEIRUT TO PROTECT THE SECURITY AND FREEDOM OF PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY DIPLOMATS AND FOREIGN JOURNALISTS, WHO DO NOT HARM THE PEOPLE'S SECURITY OR THEIR LIVES...."

--7/1/85: INTERVIEW IN BEIRUT "AL-NAHAR AL-ARABI WA AL-DUWALI" -- "WE DO NOT JUSTIFY THE KIDNAPPING OF AMERICAN CITIZENS WHO MIGHT HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH THEIR GOVERNMENT OR MIGHT BE OPPOSED TO IT."

--12/27/85: STATEMENT TO BEIRUT PRESS AS HIS "WISH FOR THE CHRISTIAN NEW YEAR" -- "LET ALL THE HOSTAGES FREE... LET THIS BE THE NEW YEAR PRESENT."

--5/30/87: END-OF-RAMADAN SERMON -- "WE HAVE TO RELEASE INNOCENT KIDNAP VICTIMS... BECAUSE GOD WANTS US TO DO JUSTICE TO OTHERS BEFORE (DOING IT TO) OURSELVES.... WE DEMAND THE RELEASE OF INNOCENT KIDNAP VICTIMS BECAUSE WE REJECT INJUSTICE TO OTHERS WITH THE SAME VEHEMENCE WITH WHICH WE REJECT INJUSTICE TO OURSELVES."

--6/29/87: "DER SPIEGEL" INTERVIEW -- "I INSIST THAT INNOCENT PEOPLE MUST NOT BE PUNISHED FOR THEIR GOVERNMENTS' CRIMES AND TERRIBLE POLICY.... IN MY LAST FRIDAY SERMON AT THE MOSQUE, AFTER US JOURNALIST CHARLES GLASS WAS KIDNAPPED, I CONDEMNED MOST SHARPLY ALL KIDNAPPINGS OF JOURNALISTS, UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS, DIPLOMATS, PHYSICIANS, AND ENGINEERS -- IN OTHER WORDS, PEOPLE WHO CONSTITUTE NO DANGER TO THE COUNTRY'S SECURITY AND ORDER."

3. DEPARTMENT ANALYSTS' REACTION TO THE LATEST STATEMENT AS IT APPEARS IN TRANSLATION IS THAT IT DOES NOT SEEM TO SIGNIFICANTLY DEPART FROM PAST RHETORIC. FADLALLAH CONTINUES TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN "INNOCENT" VICTIMS OF HOSTAGE-TAKING AND THOSE WHO THREATEN LEBANON -- ALLOWING HOSTAGE CAPTORS A RATIONALIZATION FOR THEIR ACTIONS. MOREOVER, THE STATEMENT SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN ISSUED FOR WESTERN CONSUMPTION, AS A REMINDER OF THE PLIGHT OF ARAB DETAINEES AND IN REACTION TO HOLIDAY-SEASON PRESS REPORTING ON THE CONTINUED DETENTION OF WESTERN HOSTAGES--NOT AS A PLEA TO THE LEBANESE CAPTORS.

4. DEPARTMENT ANALYSTS AND ACADEMIC CONTACTS HAVE MUSED ON THE POINT THAT FADLALLAH COULD, IF HE WERE SERIOUS ABOUT WANTING THE WESTERN HOSTAGES FREED NOW, ISSUE A "FATWA" ORDERING THEIR RELEASE. HOWEVER, BY ISSUING SUCH A FATWA, FADLALLAH COULD LOSE CREDIBILITY AND BE PERCEIVED BY RADICAL SHI"AS AS SELLING OUT TO THE WEST. MOREOVER, WOULD RISK A LOSS OF PRESTIGE AS "SPIRITUAL LEADER" OF THE SHIA IF THE CAPTORS IGNORED HIS RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTIONS.

5. DEPARTMENT WOULD WELCOME ADDITIONAL THINKING ON THIS TOPIC FROM BEIRUT AND OTHER ADDRESSEES.

6. TEXT HAS BEEN TRANSMITTED TO BEIRUT IN ANOTHER

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CHANNEL. WHITEHEAD
END OF MESSAGE

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TEXT
FADLALLAH
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